

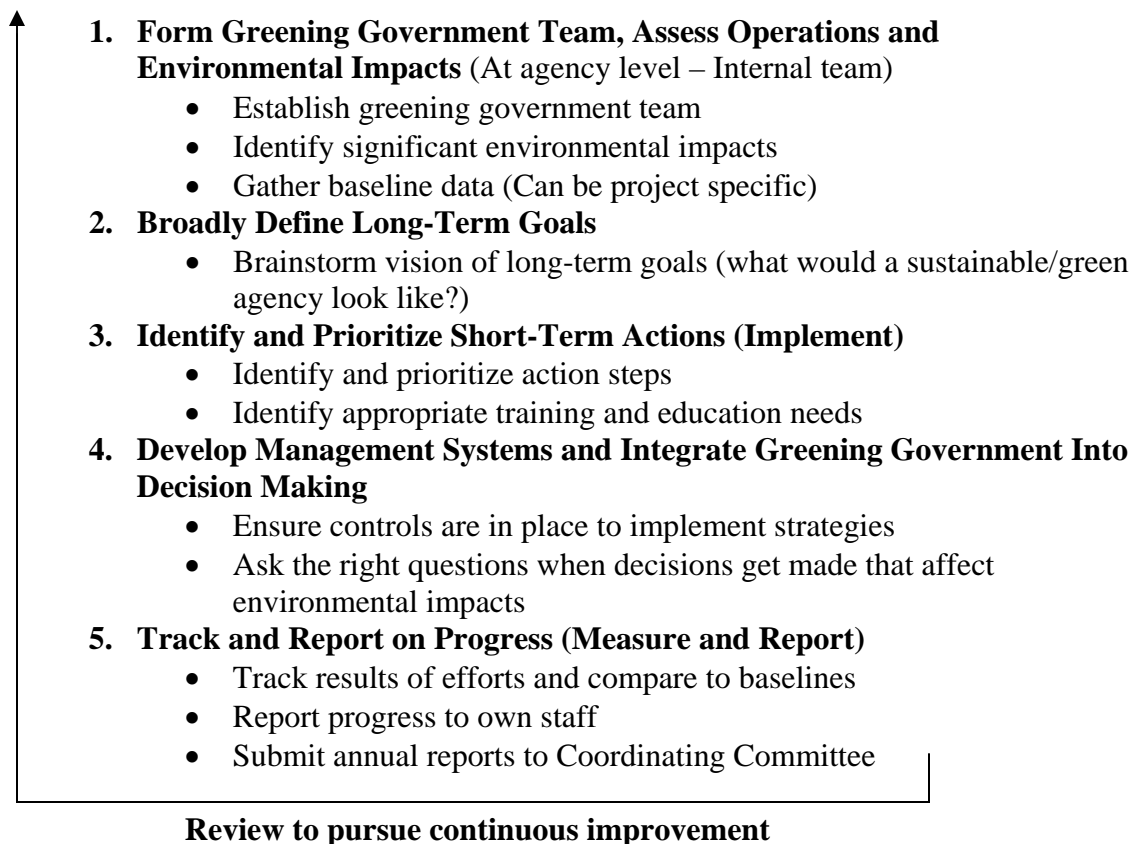
Agency Greening Government Planning – Section 3

The Greening Government Steering Committee has created a Greening Government Implementation Guide to help your agency complete a plan that outlines environmental impacts, makes recommendations for reducing these impacts, and establishes short and long-term objectives for your agency.

Section 3 of this Guide is a 5-step Road map, which is designed to be a simple, efficient process that can be applied to the wide range of agency operations within the State and provides guidelines on planning for greening government, as well as a template for agencies to use when writing their agency's plan. The aim is for each agency to review its internal operations and identify ways to minimize environmental impacts and reduce costs. It is important that agencies spend at least some time going over each step in the Road Map, and answer all relevant questions during the planning process. The 5-Step Road Map includes the following actions:

- (1) Establish a Greening Government Team
- (2) Define Long-Term Goals
- (3) Identify & Prioritize Short-Term Goals
- (4) Integrate Greening Government into Decision Making
- (5) Track & Report Progress

Greening Government Planning Road Map



Agency Sustainability Plans

The questions and discussions facilitated by the 5-step road map closely follow the format of the Agency Greening Government Plan template, which was developed as guidance for agencies when writing their Greening Government Plans.

Road Map Step 1 – Form Greening Government Team and Assess Operations and Environmental Impacts

A. Create a Greening Government Team

Before taking concrete steps to develop agency-wide greening government actions, agencies should establish a Greening Government Team (Team). A Team that includes employees most familiar with major agency operations can provide an effective means to identify sustainable actions the agency may want to pursue, develop a strategy to implement such actions, and effectively communicate greening government goals to the entire agency.

- a. Which job roles most affect agency operations that have a direct environmental impact?
- b. Who needs to participate on the Team to ensure action plans are implemented?
- c. Which staff has the resources to participate on the Team?

The appropriate number of people on the Team will depend on the number of agency facilities and complexity of agency operations.

Possible Staff Functions to Include on an Agency Greening Government Team

- Purchasing
- Operations/Facilities
- Fiscal
- Environmental/Health and Safety
- Management/Planning
- Information Technology

Once you have identified the key employees to be part of the Team, work with top-level agency management to authorize/request people to participate. Where possible, offer incentives for participation (PPAB Environmental Awards, P2 Champions, etc.) and make sure to provide a clear definition of the goals, responsibilities, and time commitments.

B. Assess Operations and Identify Environmental Impacts

The first step for the Team is to identify and describe key operations, the activities related to these operations, and the broad environmental impacts associated with these activities:

Identify the major operations the agency carries out and the activities involved, for example:

- Maintaining roads– driving vehicles, procuring road materials, de-icing
- Processing tax returns – paper use, copying, printing

- Housing students or inmates – heating and cooling, food preparation, laundry

Conduct a quick inventory of the environmental impacts associated with the activities listed above, for example:

- Energy/fuel use associated with vehicles, heating and cooling buildings, computer use – Air emissions, GHG's, waste vehicle fluids, etc.
- Chemical generation associated with product purchases (e.g. mercury thermometers), use of pesticides for landscaping and cleaning chemicals
- Resource use associated with consumption of paper, water and food
- Land impacts related to where buildings are situated, wastes disposed, etc.

Select a range of issues to focus on based on which of the activities the agency has direct control or influence over.

Gather agency operational baseline data on energy use (utility bills), materials consumption (purchasing records), waste generation (disposal records/fees), and other environmental impacts, wherever possible. Agencies should also work to identify the costs associated with each activity and impact. These baselines can be collected for specific projects that an agency undertakes (e.g. if you change out 100 light fixtures, give the before and after energy use for the project).

Agencies may want to use the sample chart below to help them create a broad picture of their operations, activities and associated environmental impacts.

| General Operations | Activities | Energy | Chemicals | Waste | Natural Resources | Health and Environmental Impacts |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---|
| Building Maintenance | Interior Cleaning | | x | | x | -chemicals affect water quality -indoor air quality |
| | Pest Control | | x | | x | -water quality -exposure to chemicals |
| Office Operations | Printing | x | x | x | x | -electricity use -paper use |
| | Office Equipment | x | x | x | | -electricity use -air emissions -end-of-life disposal |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Road Map Step 2 – Broadly Define Long-Term Goals

Creating a set of long-term goals can be helpful in stimulating ideas for action and in making decisions to prevent future problems. In light of the Step 1 findings on how the agency's activities impact the environment, the Team should do a quick brainstorm to come up with some examples of what the agency's operations would look like if they were sustainable. The following questioning strategy, based on sustainable principles, can encourage this creative thinking:

| Environmental Impact | Long-Term Sustainable Solutions |
|--|---|
| Fossil fuel use/air pollution? | -Vehicle operate on clean, renewable fuels -Energy for building heating and cooling from renewable sources such as solar, wind and hydro power. |
| Persistent and toxic chemicals? | -Reduce pesticide use through integrated pest management programs -Purchase organically grown food |
| Consumption of resources and degradation of natural systems? | -Purchase paper with high percentage or recycle content. -Only use native plantings for lawns and grounds -Wood products from sustainably harvested forests |

Once the Team has identified general long-term greening government goals, it should move to Road Map Step 3 to identify and prioritize more specific short-term actions that can be implemented.

Road Map Step 3 – Identify and Prioritize Short-Term Actions

Inevitably, there will be a gap between an agency's current activities and impacts versus the long-term vision of how a sustainable agency should look. This step is designed to help your agency define how to close that gap over time by identifying a list of what actions it can take now to move toward the vision of a sustainable agency, thereby reducing environmental impacts and lowering operational costs.

Add ideas about the 5 chosen categories that can be used as a starting point. Have Coordinating Committee collect examples and list for reference. The Team can use these examples, as well as its own proposals, to put together a broad list of ideas that could help move the agency toward more sustainable operations.

Once the Team has brainstormed a list of potential actions, it can prioritize which actions to pursue by considering the following questions:

| <i>Question</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Will the action result in environmental/health benefits? | | |
| Are the environmental benefits significant? | | |
| Will the action result in a cost savings over the life of the product/action? | | |
| Are the cost savings significant? | | |
| Will the action support progress in one or more of the Implementation Guide priority areas? | | |
| Is the time frame and ease of implementation manageable given agency resources? | | |
| Would this activity help to maintain compliance and meet regulatory requirements? | | |
| Could the action reduce compliance obligations (eliminating a hazardous waste)? | | |
| Is this issue of significant concern to employees, or those who use your services, etc? | | |
| Does the activity have a clear educational value or provide high visibility? | | |

Those actions that have a “yes” answer to many or all of the questions should obviously be given highest priority. The long-term vision developed in Step 2 also should be considered as the Team selects actions. While elements of the vision may not be practical today, the Team should pursue actions that make future efforts easier to pursue (for example, design a new building's roof angle to allow solar panels to be added later if current economics don't make that choice viable today).

After selecting priority actions, the Team can create a greening government workplan that assigns responsibilities and due-dates for implementation. Agencies may want to use the inventory developed by the Coordinating Committee to guide them in developing their current list of priorities.

What if my agency has a small staff and only leases office space?

Examples of Actions for Small Offices in Leased Space

- Purchasing – buy recycled, remanufactured products, energy efficient office equipment
- Building contract/lease – include conditions in the lease agreement regarding recycling, non-toxic cleaners, energy efficiency, etc.
- Waste prevention – paper use reduction, double-sided copying, behavior changes to increase recycling
- Flex time – telecommuting, encourage employees to use public transit
- Energy efficiency – computer use, turn off lights, etc.
- Choice of office location – Select a site close to public transportation and other services

Planning for greening government should also be accompanied by appropriate education and training of agency employees. Training can take many forms, from a formal workshop on one or more environmental topics, to simple reminders placed around the workplace. The State Sustainability Division has developed various educational sessions that agencies can use to educate staff and promote sustainable practices. These training modules can be found at www.co.train.org.

Road Map Step 4 – Management Systems and Integrating Greening Government Into Decision Making

A. Integrating Greening Government Into Operations

While developing a greening government workplan is key, it is just as important to devise an ongoing process through which greening government priorities are actually carried out by an agency regardless of individual commitment. The Team should work with management to develop an internal system to ensure that the agency workplan is implemented throughout the agency and maintained over time.

Within each agency, choices are made by various people at certain points along the decision making process. At these key junctures, decisions can have long-term repercussions on the agency's environmental impacts. Teams should work to identify these key decision points and develop a process to ensure that environmental considerations and actions in the Plan are acknowledged and incorporated into these decision points.

The Team should consider the following questions:

1. Where are decision points that affect material/energy flows, e.g., purchasing, budget approvals, building design, etc?

2. How can we ensure greening government questions get asked when these decisions are made?
3. How can we ensure that when changes are planned that greening government issues are considered and opportunities pursued, e.g., building new building, buying new vehicles, etc?

| <i>Examples of Decision Points</i> | <i>How to integrate Greening Government</i> |
|---|---|
| Purchasing – Choice of product or service purchases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate EPP options into specifications, bids, RFP's. • Train employees who make purchases in environmental impacts of their choices and preferable alternatives |
| New construction, building modifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select builder with LEED experience • Specify materials that meet environmental criteria |
| Budget meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate criteria that requires that those requesting budget approval for new projects demonstrate that environmental impacts are considered and minimized where feasible |
| Facilities management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure solid waste contractors are asked to propose recycling options with associated cost comparisons. |

B. Developing a Management System

Once key decision points have been identified, agencies should work to develop some sort of management system that allocates environmental responsibilities among its staff. Developing such a system will ensure that greening government policies and programs will be incorporated into on-going and long-term agency operations.

Given the diversity of agencies' activities and responsibilities, a greening government management system should be designed to fit the size and breadth of an agency's operations. A small office with ten employees may simply choose to develop an environmental office policy and raise environmental issues at their staff meetings, while an agency with multiple facilities and large impacts may elect to develop a more formalized system. Regardless of the type and complexity of the system chosen, it is critical that systems are formally written and approved by the Agency Director and distributed among all appropriate staff. It is also important to develop a system that remains flexible so that changes in agency structure, operations or circumstances can be easily addressed in revisions to the document.

Examples of ways to develop greening government management systems:

- Integrate environmental responsibilities into job descriptions and performance reviews

- Provide the opportunity for employee feedback to review program efforts
- Offer recognition – awards, highlight work at staff meetings
- Establish a written agency greening government policy that sets a broad vision for staff.
- Perform spot checks, e.g., is paper being recycled or is it in the regular trash?
- Incorporate environmental considerations into standard operating procedures, including education, training and information dissemination
- Ask designated individuals for periodic updates on progress

Road Map Step 5 – Track and Report on Progress

A key element of any successful greening government effort is to regularly track and report on progress in meeting greening government goals and objectives and make changes as necessary to ensure continuous improvement. The Governor's Executive Order D005 05 requires the Coordinating Committee to submit an annual progress report of all greening government projects implemented throughout the year and their environmental and economic benefits.

Agency Tracking and Reporting Form

The Coordinating Committee has developed an *Agency Tracking and Reporting Form* that will be issued each year by the Committee, and should be used by agencies to describe and account for their impacts and greening government efforts on an annual basis. The form requests information on the five greening government program areas:

- Energy Efficiency
- Water Conservation/Quality
- Waste Reduction and Recycling
- Environmental Preferable Purchasing
- Transportation

Data and information generated from the form will be compiled into the annual *State Greening Government Report* to the Governor, as required by Executive Order D005 05.

Continuous Improvement

In addition to this annual tracking, agencies should conduct their own review of their sustainability program. An annual review will provide agencies with an opportunity to step back and consider how well the greening government program is working. Key questions the Team should consider are:

- How effectively are we performing against our goals and targets?
- If our performance is not meeting expectation:
 - What is the problem e.g., resources, training, failed to revise plans when change occurred, etc?

- What steps would prevent this problem in the future?
- Is our management system effective?
 - Are we catching mistakes before they become big problems?
 - Are we adapting to change effectively
- What are upcoming changes that may affect what we need to manage, such as new environmental regulations, changes in our operations, budgets, etc.
- What can we do to ensure continuous improvement?

Conclusion

Achieving a more sustainable agency through greening government may seem overwhelming, especially to those who have had little or no experience with the concept. Devising, implementing and evaluating greening government efforts, however, do not need to take an extensive amount of time or resources. Rather, agency greening government practices can be implemented through a simple step-by-step process that each agency can customize according to its own scope, abilities, resources and impacts. Agencies can rely on a wealth of existing information and resources that are available to them through the Greening Government Coordinating Committee.

At a minimum, agencies should strive to incorporate some of the key questions and environmental issues discussed in the Guide into their decision-making processes to ensure that significant impacts are addressed. Additionally, agencies can focus on those issues that have clear economic benefit and that are manageable given existing resources. Agencies should never lose sight of long-term greening government goals and remember that a more sustainable state government will result from new ideas and inclusion of staff at all levels.

Through changes in daily operations, ongoing programs, and long-range planning, state agencies can have a significant positive impact on the environment, economic efficiency of state government and the character of Colorado's communities.